

(Portland, Oregon)

May 17, 1966

STATINTL

2 Disagree On CIA Role

WASHINGTON (AP) — Sen. Richard B. Russell, D-Ga., disputed Monday charges that the Central Intelligence Agency influences U.S. foreign policy actions. Sen. J. W. Fulbright, D-Ark., said it does have an impact.

Russell touched off debate on the Senate floor with his statement opposing a proposal to add three members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to the senatorial group supervising the CIA.

Russell is chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee and also heads the subcommittee charged with overseeing the CIA. The five other members are senior members of Russell's committee and of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

Charges that the CIA at times operates independently of the State Department and influences foreign policy actions are "sheer poppycock," Russell said. He said these "erroneous charges are calculated to deceive members of Congress."

Fulbright, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, said the way things have developed in the world has brought the CIA into far more

activities than was contemplated when it was set up in 1947.

Bay Of Pigs Cited

"And it is clear on the record that the CIA does have an impact of American foreign policy," Fulbright said.

"I think in many countries it is more influential than our ambassador and I have had ambassadors who have told me this."

Russell, waving a piece of newspaper, denounced a New York Times editorial which, he said, stated that the supervisory subcommittee members had been "screened" by the CIA.

"The CIA had no more connection with the selection of these subcommittee members than it had with the selection of editorial staff of the New York Times," he said.

Among those joining the debate was Sen. Ernest Gruening, D-Alaska, who said the failure at the Bay of Pigs showed that the CIA does make foreign policy. The CIA was able to persuade two presidents to go ahead with the project, he said, adding "They completely misinformed the President."

Russell replied that "What you are saying is that the CIA sold the President a bill of goods. But the CIA couldn't have moved one foot without the approval of the President."